(a) whether the Government propose to collaborate with the USA on space research programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the broad areas of cooperation with USA and likely benefits to be accrued therefrom ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) to (c) Our country has had a long standing cooperative and commercial association with the USA in the area of space. Data from the US Landsat and National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) satellites are being received and utilised in the country. The SI-EOSAT of the USA is responsible for marketing the Indian IRS satellite data globally.

The Department of Space and the Department of Science & Technology of the Government of India and the National Aeronautics & Space Administration (NASA) and the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the United States of America have discussed potential scientific cooperation in the field of earth sciences and associated exchange of data. Based on these discussions, it is intended to formulate cooperative agreements, for specific scientific and related data exchange, for consideration by the respective Governments.

Allocation of Power to Karnataka

1902. SHRI ANANTH KUMAR :
SHRI SHATRUGHAN PRASAD SINGH :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is acute power shortage in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the measures taken to ensure adequate supply of power keeping in view the agricultural needs;

(c) the names of on-going power projects in the state and the quantum of power generated from each of them;

(d) the quantum of power being supplied to the State from Southern Grid and joint hydro power projects separately;

(e) the names of the projects approved so far in private sector and the number of proposals are under consideration; and

(f) the quantum of power is expected to be generated in CEA Karnataka on the completion of these projects ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) During the period April, 1996 – January, 1997, the energy requirement in Karnataka was 20230 MU against which the availability was 19944 MU which represents a shortage of 26.1%

(b) Various measures taken to improve the availability of power in Karnataka include improving performance of existing power stations, capacity addition, reduction in transmission & distribution losses, implementation of better demand management, energy conservation measures and arranging assistance from neighbouring system etc. At present, agriculture consumers are getting a minimum of 8 Hrs./day supply. Karnataka has been allocated 40% share from 15% unallocated quote of Central Power generation in the Southern Region.

(c) Station-wise energy generation in Karnataka during 1996-97 (upto January, 1997) is given below :

Name of Agency	Station	Energy Generation (MU) 1996-97 (upto Jan., 1997)
Karnataka Power Corporation Ltd.	Raichur	4170
	Shravathy	2915
	Kalinadi	1567
	Supa Dam	199
	Bhandra	11
	Linganamk	120
	Varahi	674
	Ghatprabha	77
	Mallapur	1
	Mani DPH	9
	Total	9743
Karnataka Electricity Board	Jeg	102
	Shivasamud	83
	Shimshapur	76
	Munirabad	58
	Total	319
Bhoruka Power Corporation Ltd.	Shivpur	45
Total Karnataka	Thermal	4170
	Hydro	5937
	Total	10107

(d) During the period April, 1996 to January, 1997, as against the entitlement of 3784.5 MU from the Southern Grid, actual drawal by Karnataka was 4756.2 MU Karnataka received an assistance of 618.6 MU during April, 1996 to January, 1997 from Maharashtra.

(e) and (f) Two private power proposals in Karnataka has been approved by the Central Electricity Authority. The details of which are given below :

(i) Mangalore TPS 1000 MW

(ii) Torangallu TPS 260 MW

There is only one project i.e. Yelahanka DGPP Extension by M/s. Karnataka Electricity Board having capacity of 2x23.4=46.8 MW which is under examination in Central Electricity Authority.

Increase in Price of Petrol

1903. SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI NAVINCHANDRA MEHTA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the comparative figures of petrol prices both national and international market for the last three years as on date and the reasons for it being higher in the national market;

(b) whether the off-shore drilling has gone down drastically during the last three years;

(c) if so, the details thereof, Statewise; and

(d) the corrective measures being taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU) : (a) Information is being collected and shall be placed on the Table of the House.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The details of metreage and wells drilled during the last three years in offshore are as under:-

1993-94	359702	162
1994-95	204116	89
1995-96	163086	79

(d) The quantum of drilling activity depends on implementation of approved field development projects, new prospect generation by basin analysis and evaluation process, results of exploratory and delineation drilling and availability of exploration acreages.

Amendment to Urban Land Act

1904. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE :
SHRI RAM NAIK :
SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government propose to bring about amendments to the Urban Land Act, 1976;

(b) if so, the salient features of the proposed amendments; and

(c) by when these amendments are likely to be put before Parliament ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU) : (a) and (b) Government of India is considering proposals to amend the Urban Land (Ceiling & Regulation) Act, 1976 in order to make it more workable and effective. The State Governments have been requested to give their suggestions regarding amendments to the Act. A Committee has also been set up for making recommendations to amend the Act.

(c) It would be difficult to give a definite time frame because as per the Constitutional requirement, after the approval by the Government, the Legislatures of at least two States where the Urban Land (Ceiling & Regulation) Act, 1976 is applicable have to concur and pass resolution under Article 252(2) of the Constitution to enable the introduction of the Bill in the Parliament.

Industry Status to Housing Sector

1905. SHRI V. PRADEEP DEV : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether there have been persistent demands for according the status of Industry to the Housing Construction Sector; and

(b) if so, the action Government propose to take in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU) : (a) and (b) The demand for declaring housing as an industry has been raised in the past in the context of requirement of increased institutional funding for the housing sector. It was noted that only service sector part of housing was not getting institutional funding support, as the manufacture of building materials was already within the purview of industry.

With the establishment of National Housing Bank and a chain of housing finance institutions in different parts of the country, the requirement of institutional funding for the housing sector has been significently met. Moreover, refinance from industrial finance institutions, namely, IDBI and ICICI, is also now available for housing projects costing more than Rs. 5 crores on a case-to-case basis without housing being declared an industry.

In the light of the above, the institutional flow of funds to the housing sector has gradually increased and the demand for declaring housing as an industry has abated.

Local Purchase

1906. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :